

**ASD H. Allen Holmes**

**“SOF Modernization – Assuring Superiority for the Future”**

**National Defense Industrial Association**

Washington, DC

February 19, 1998

Thank you General Skibbie, General Moore, Colonel Henderson and all the participants of this symposium. First, I would like to recognize the new National Defense Industrial Association for sponsoring this conference. In the nine years that it has been held, this symposium has consistently provided an excellent forum for members of industry and government to meet and discuss issues important to Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict. I look forward to NDIA's continued support.

I am glad that you had an opportunity to hear from General Schoomaker yesterday and to participate in a number of workshops to discuss issues of critical importance to our national security. It is my privilege to join you this morning to address "SOF Modernization" and to share with you some of my thoughts from a policy perspective.

As many of you know, last year, the Department was involved in a number of studies – such as the Quadrennial Defense Review and the National Defense Panel. These studies took a hard look at our future defense needs and the direction in which the Department is likely to be headed into the next century. One of the encouraging

developments that my staff saw during the many panels and review group sessions, was the prevailing recognition of the importance of SOF.

Our senior defense leaders – both Secretary Cohen and General Shelton – are very familiar with the Special Operations Community and its accomplishments. This is not surprising, as SOF has played a part in most of the recent military operations that have received high-level attention – including our ongoing efforts to create inroads of peace and cooperation in Bosnia; efforts to safeguard innocent citizens of the US and our allies in Africa; and efforts to stem the growing threat posed by terrorists and the use of asymmetric weapons of mass destruction.

Indeed, SOF has come a long way in the last decade, and its capabilities have been increasingly demanded by CINCs, Ambassadors, and policymakers. Nevertheless, we cannot permit ourselves to become complacent. Our challenge is to ensure that we remain at the leading edge in this world of accelerating change. To meet this challenge, we need to ask ourselves 3 basic questions:

- 1) How will the battlefield change?
- 2) What will SOF's role be in this new environment?  
and
- 3) How can we best accommodate that role?

## **HOW WILL THE BATTLEFIELD CHANGE?**

Approaching the 21<sup>st</sup> century, our country faces a dynamic and uncertain security environment. We are in a period of strategic opportunity as the changing global economy and proliferation of international information systems continue to transform culture, commerce, and global interaction. We also find ourselves in a period of uncertainty, surrounded by increasingly complex, dangerous, and unpredictable threats.

The national security challenges that confront us, do not respect boundaries and they seldom have a face. Weakened alliances and emergent regional powers in Southwest Asia, the Middle East and Northeast Asia will continue to threaten regional stability. Meanwhile transnational threats such as drug trafficking and terrorism continue to expand. Furthermore, as we have seen in

Somalia, the former Yugoslavia and Zaire, failed or failing states create instability, internal conflict, and humanitarian crises. In some cases, governments lose their ability to maintain public order and provide for the needs of their people, creating the conditions for civil unrest, famine, massive flows of migrants across international borders, and aggressive actions by neighboring states.

Safeguarding a free and stable world will require a range of action on the part of the international community. While the United States has no desire to be the world's policeman, we will do what we can to make our world safer and more prosperous. And the actions that we take should be considered within the framework of the three-pronged defense strategy articulated by Secretary Cohen earlier this year: shape, respond and prepare. Our forces are called upon to *help shape* the international environment and *respond* to the full spectrum of crises, *while preparing* now for an uncertain future.

## **SOF'S ROLE IN THIS NEW ENVIRONMENT**

- **Shaping the International Strategic Environment**

John F. Kennedy once said that peace is a daily process which gradually changes opinions, slowly erodes old barriers, and quietly builds new structures. And however undramatic the pursuit of peace, the pursuit must go on. Although they seldom make the newspaper headlines, SOF's steady-state efforts help foster stability and prevent local problems from developing into threats to international security.

Our humanitarian demining efforts around the world offer a poignant example of SOF's contribution to shaping the international security environment. As part of the U.S. Government's humanitarian demining program, Special Forces units have the primary responsibility for training host nation deminers. Civil Affairs units help countries to develop indigenous demining entities. And PSYOP personnel conduct mine awareness programs which educate populations in affected areas regarding the dangers of landmines, what they look like, and what to do if a landmine is located.

DoD also continues to pursue a robust research and development program to develop simple, inexpensive equipment to enhance a country's ability to detect and clear landmines. Recently, my office hosted a workshop that brought together scientists, policymakers and the heads of Mine Action Centers to discuss the technological needs of deminers *in their different operational environments*. The most immediate needs identified were low-tech equipment, such as protective devices, and reliable tools, like vegetation cutters, that would help clear areas where mines may lie. The challenge for this program is that the equipment we design can be adapted for the deminers laboring in the hot Jordanian desert and those in the lush Cambodian tropics and those in the cool Bosnian hills. Congress has appropriated over \$16 million this year for these R&D activities, and a similar amount of funding is projected out to 2003.

Since our humanitarian demining effort began four years ago, SOF personnel conducted humanitarian demining training in 15 countries throughout Africa, Latin America, Indochina, and Bosnia. In 1997 alone, over 276 U.S. military trained an estimated 1,200

deminers—more than double the number in 1996. In addition, over the last two years, DoD has provided more than \$900,000 in equipment and supplies to assist deminers.

The goal of our humanitarian efforts is to help countries build long-term indigenous infrastructures capable of educating the population to protect itself from landmines, eliminating the hazards posed by landmines, and returning mined areas to their previous condition. Through this steady-state effort, SOF is helping other countries to transform these fields back to usable, planting fields. And in doing so, SOF efforts help build confidence in fledgling governments and allow countries to finally move past the wounds inflicted by past wars.

- **Responding to the Full Spectrum of Crises**

While we do our best to promote regional stability and deter crises through steady-state efforts like humanitarian demining, we must be ready to respond to those crises that do hit. The U.S. military can, and has, provided rapid response, logistics, transportation and global communications support capabilities



required for a humanitarian relief operation. Similarly, we have a lot to offer in support of complex peacekeeping operations. But the United States cannot operate alone. Transporting massive amounts of relief supplies around the world, coordinating the distribution of supplies, and assisting in the implementation of peace accords all represent massive challenges that no one country can tackle alone.

The multinational nature of both humanitarian assistance and peacekeeping operations requires us to prepare to work closely with other countries. SOF, with their language proficiency, cultural awareness, and regional orientation, are uniquely suited to serve as DoD's representatives with local governments as well as non-governmental and international organizations during such humanitarian missions. Our military personnel routinely demonstrate their flexibility and ability to work around almost any interoperability challenge once an operation has begun.

We recognize that doctrine should not, and cannot, be made universal: one size will not fit all, given the different practices and tradition of various armed forces. But we can endeavor to ensure

that the doctrines and techniques of our primary partners are roughly in harmony. If we are to conduct these operations together, we must first be familiar with each of our partners in other countries. We must develop creative ways to meet the overall goals of the mission despite our differences. And to conduct these operations with greatest effectiveness and efficiencies, we must seek synergies among the different participants, capitalizing on our various strengths.

Because of the experience, adaptability and creativity of our Special Operators, SOF can and has led the way in finding the best ways to conduct these operations while also reducing risk. Meanwhile, industry can also play a role by recognizing the varying requirements due to environmental, cultural, and operational parameters in the different regions of the world where SOF personnel are deployed.

- **Preparing Now for the Future**

Indeed, SOF has been seen as an attractive force for peacetime operations like demining, humanitarian assistance, and

peacekeeping because of its regional orientation, language skills, and cultural sensitivity. As the demand for SOF continues to increase and the types of missions become more diverse, it is important to remember that Special Operators are warriors – first and foremost.

From its founding, SOF have always been known – and respected – for their ability to carry out the most demanding direct action, special reconnaissance, and unconventional warfare missions. Special Operators have distinguished themselves in every major American conflict of the past four decades. We can expect that these traditional missions will continue to be central to SOF.

Nevertheless, as I indicated in the beginning of these remarks, those who do seek to challenge us will do so not only with tanks, jet aircraft, and aircraft carriers. We also must be capable of responding to aggressors who operate outside of traditional parameters to exploit our weaknesses – to attack us asymmetrically – challenging our political, economic, technological, cultural, and other interests, both overseas and at home.

Protection of our infrastructure, private commercial activities, or of our citizens on U.S. soil do not typically fall within the legal or political authority of the military. But at the same time, these challenges may be too complex for any single agency to handle. Instead, confronting these aggressors will involve swift, decisive multi-agency and multi-sectoral response.

It is important to note that the U.S. military strictly observes the Posse Comitatus Act. Our armed forces do not make arrests, seize evidence, or interrogate people – that is a law enforcement function that is strictly off limits. However, the ambiguity and complexity of future threats, whose impacts cross interagency lines of responsibility, may require military to conduct operations close to “the seam” between military and other agency functions. The military forces assigned to these difficult missions, must be mature, with the necessary political sensitivity, unwavering ethics and, the ability to quickly discern the line between legal and moral responsibility. In this operational environment, SOF is well-equipped to lead the way.

Already, the U.S. government has been adapting ourselves to operate in this ambiguous and complex operational environment. In the last decade, the U.S. Government has developed robust programs, policies, strategies and capabilities to defend against the terrorist and drug trafficking threats across the interagency. And SOF has played an important role in this effort.

### **HOW CAN WE BEST ACCOMMODATE THAT ROLE?**

With the ever increasing demand for SOF, the high OPTEMPO and PERSTEMPO, and constrained defense budget, it is important that policymakers continuously develop and adapt policies on how far we are willing for SOF to go.

Meanwhile, SOF leadership needs to ensure that we attract and retain quality people for these increasingly diverse and difficult missions. Furthermore, both SOF leadership and the SOF community must reconcile our training objectives with our strategic role and the ways in which SOF is being employed. As General Schoomaker has said, SOF must "train for certainty while educating

for uncertainty.” No doubt, this is a difficult task – which will require leadership, vision and creativity at all levels of the command.

But leadership is not the only thing required . . . one of the most important facets for ensuring that we are ready to face the challenges ahead is to develop a program of “Intelligent Modernization.”

- To maximize the limited Major Force Program-11 Research and Development funds, we must work closely with Services, their laboratories and development centers, as well as the National Laboratories, and clearly articulate SOF needs and requirements to capitalize on their efforts.
- We must focus the SOF research and development program on high pay-off technologies – emphasizing equipment that is the most strategically agile and those items and systems that give us quantum leaps in capability.
- We must also closely examine our legacy systems and determine when we should modify and enhance and when

we should replace. We need to continue to look for help from the services – to develop new strike, mobility, engagement, support and C4I capabilities.

The critical reality is that the choices we make today will make the difference between success and failure in tomorrow.

Funding in the future will continue to be tight. As such, industry must work hand-in-hand with U.S. Special Operations Command and the Services to find synergies and ensure interoperability.

The years ahead will undoubtedly test our adaptability and our ability to accept change. I am confident that SOF have the creativity and professional skills to tackle new, unconventional tasks, while maintaining their traditional skills. Let us make sure that we provide SOF with the right tools to help them emerge in the coming decades stronger than ever.

**Thank you.**

*DASD Forces & Resources*

**Remarks to the 1998 SO/LIC Symposium**

February 19, 1998

Secretary Holmes just outlined for you some of the important questions that we will have to answer, in order to ensure that SOF will be prepared to meet the challenges of the future. It is clearly evident that adapting SOF to support our nation's emerging security needs will be an incredibly important and difficult challenge that must be met. So, what do we need to do today to meet these challenges? I hope to shed some light on some potential answers to this question.

*[GRAPH 1 - DoD Budget]*

Let's begin with the SOF Budget. For most of you the SOF Budget is an old story. If we look at its overall relationship with the DoD budget, we can see that an extremely small portion of the budget is dedicated to Special Operations. As you can see by this graph, Major Force Program-11, that is the SOF account, represents less than 1.4% of the overall DoD budget.



*[GRAPH 2 - MFP-11 Budget]*

If we look at the SOF funding in more detail we can see that if we discount inflation, the top line is fairly flat. A little more than \$3 Billion per year. Given that SOF has not experienced major reductions in manpower, and that there has been no reduction in the demand for SOF forces from the Theater CINCs, SOF's equipment accounts, which are made up of procurement and Research & Development, have had to provide the source for needed funds. In other words, the fiscal demands of SOF's operational requirements have precluded us from putting as many resources as we would like in the equipment accounts. From the industrial perspective this means few new programs – and taxes stress those equipment programs that do exist.

Recently, for new and expanding missions, SOF has had to ask the Department for more funds. Fortunately, we have been able to do this with some success – particularly with respect to mission areas in which SOF plays a primary role. However, our history of success at supporting our unfunded requirements has partially

blinded us to the fact that this kind of approach cannot support the development of visionary programs – and visionary programs are what SOF needs for the future.

One thing that SOF has in its favor is the fact that both the Quadrennial Defense Review and the Report of the National Defense Panel acknowledged the fact that special operations forces are uniquely suited to many of the challenges that our nation is expected to face in the foreseeable future.

*[GRAPH 3: Transforming Defense - NDP Quote on SOF]*

However, despite the fact that decision makers recognize the need for SOF, they must also live within the constraints of a fixed budget ceiling. Any increase in the SOF budget has to come from somewhere. The Balanced Budget Agreement means that we can no longer expect OSD to provide more funds without clearly identifying who or what the billpayers are, and how we expect those bills will be paid.

*[GRAPH 4 - Defense Reform Initiative]*

Secretary Cohen's Defense Reform Initiative proposes a number of approaches for reducing costs. These include:

■ Streamlining Organizations;

- The Office of the Secretary of Defense is being reduced by 33% from FY 1996 levels.
- The Joint Staff will be reduced by 29% from FY 1996 levels
- Defense Agencies will be reduced by 21% over the next five years

These reductions and reorganizations are to more efficiently position the Department to face future challenges and weed-out unnecessary overlap, complexity, and redundancy.

■ Reengineering Business Practices;

- By January 1, 2000, all aspects of the contracting process for major weapons systems will be paper free.
- In FY 2000, 90 percent of DoD purchases under \$2500 will be made using the Government IMPAC purchase card.

- By this July, DoD will stop volume printing of all DoD-wide regulations and instructions and will make them available only through the internet or CD-ROM.

■ Competing to improve and save,

The Department is moving forward to increase outsourcing, for example:

- The DoD is planning to compete the following functions: civilian pay, military retiree pay, personnel services, disposal of surplus property, management of leased property, and drug testing laboratories.

- DoD will continue to pursue public-private competitions for depot maintenance work to the full extent allowed by law.

■ Eliminating unnecessary infrastructure.

- DoD will seek congressional authority for two additional BRAC rounds.

- DoD will consolidate, restructure and regionalize many of its support agencies.

- DoD will seek permanent # legislative authority to privatize family housing construction

Happily, the SOF community can say that it has already implemented many of the ideas proposed in the Defense Reform Initiative.

- As you have heard from the CINC yesterday USSOCOM has taken a radically new structure to improve the flow of information in the command and enhance its ability to perform its mission.

- USSOCOM has worked to reengineer and improve the command's strategic planning and requirements development processes.

- USSOCOM has been at the forefront of outsourcing – which is exemplified by the continued development of the Special Operations Forces Support Activity (SOFSA). SOFSA is an innovative approach for meeting the long-term logistical support requirements for many SOF unique equipment items.

- USSOCOM has tried to eliminate low-priority infrastructure.

Please note that I didn't state *unnecessary* infrastructure.

Because of fiscal pressures the SOF community, like the rest of DoD, has had to make some difficult choices.

Obviously there is room for additional improvement in all of these areas. However, as one might gather from the improvements I just listed, most of the easy changes have already been made. For SOF to make any major gains from here we must consider cutting into the meat of our operational capability—something which is **clearly** unacceptable—or seriously consider other new ways of doing business.

What things might we consider? Perhaps we should take a hard look at our traditional missions. Are conventional forces doing these missions? Where should SOF be willing to accept risk? What missions does SOF do that no one else can do?

We should also look at how we do these missions. Can we do these missions differently? Could some of our missions be

outsourced? Could we turn to industry to support the production of PSYOP products for example? Might it be more cost effective for the private sector to provide critical expertise we find in our Civil Affairs units for short-term humanitarian and disaster relief missions? Could we turn to industry to provide overseas logistical support? Ideas like these could revolutionize the way SOF does business.

Along similar lines, we need to take a hard look at the tools that SOF uses to carry out its missions. In the past, the SOF community could afford to expend its resources to stay on the leading edge of technology. The SOF community maintained capabilities it no longer needed and pursued any course to stay at the leading edge of technology. Today the community needs to carefully select its choices. We need to eliminate marginal equipment programs, reduce our overhead costs and decrease the life-cycle costs associated with maintaining our weapons, mobility and C4I systems.

Let me conclude by saying that decisionmakers within the Department recognize that SOF are critically important to the national defense. That said, they also recognize that SOF needs to

modernize if it is to remain a viable national capability. Ultimately this means that SOF will require additional funding. But before consideration can be given to providing additional funding for SOF, the SOF community must develop a better understanding of where and how additional resources can best be utilized. It must also take all possible steps to improve the use of its current funds. In this era of decreasing budgets, we can no longer afford to make decisions that only provide marginal increases in operational capability.

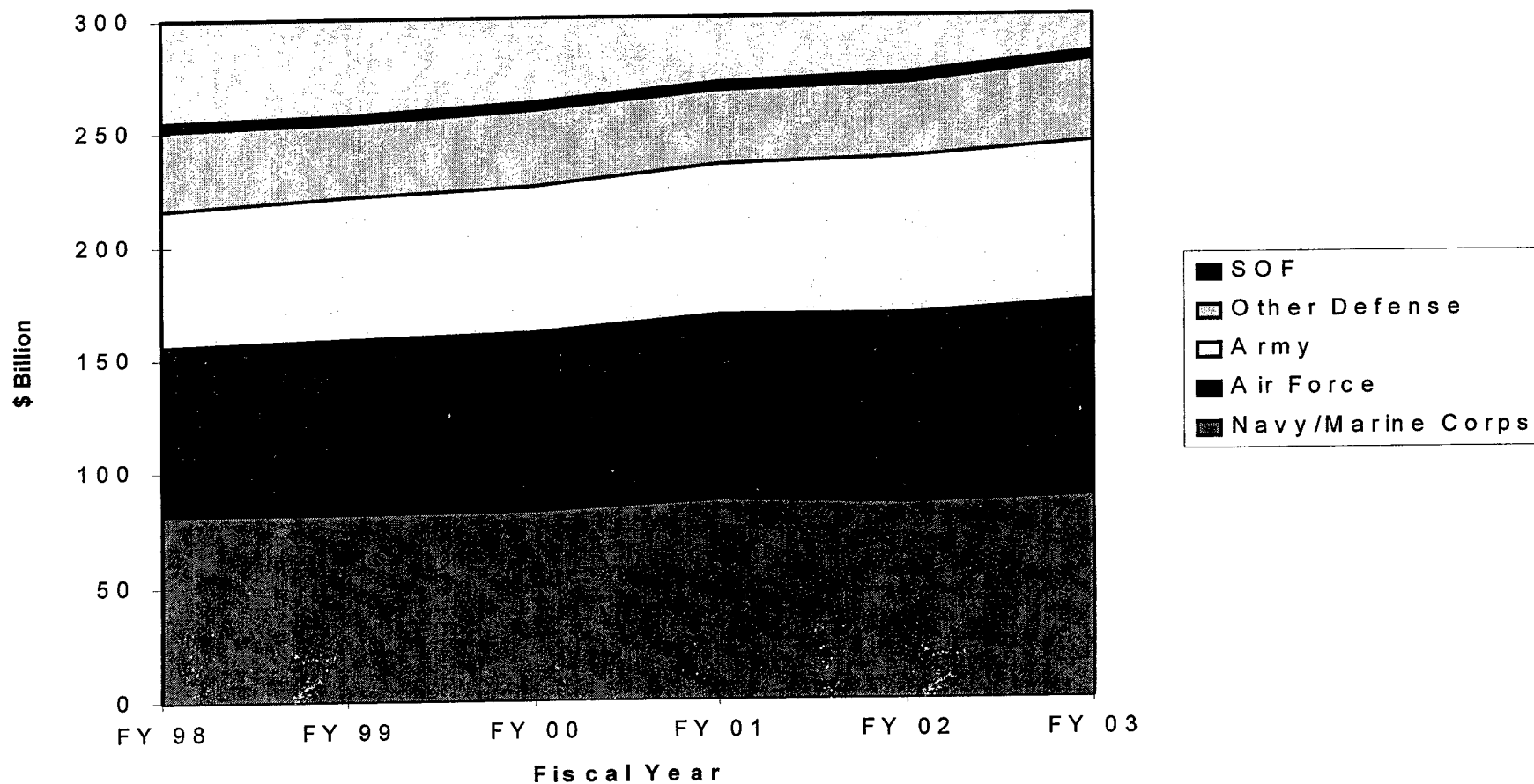
Let me close with a line I heard Mr. Holmes use of few minutes ago,

**“The critical reality is that the choices we make today, will make the difference between success and failure tomorrow.”**

*[Ask Brig Gen Doug Brown to make remarks]*



# *DoD Budget*



# *Transforming Defense National Security in the 21st Century*

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A Transformation Strategy --

“... We expect a modernized Special Operations Forces will play a key role in containing the transnational threats to U.S. interests, both at home and abroad.”

# *Defense Reform Initiative*

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- Streamline organizations
  - Reengineer business practices
  - Compete to improve and save
  - Eliminate unnecessary infrastructure
-